

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. to 5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A microwaveable vacuum skin package comprising:

- a) a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
- b) a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface, the lower surface of the bottom web being adhered to the upper surface of the support member;
- c) a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and
- d) a top web disposed on the food product;

wherein the top web is draped over the food product, by a vacuum skin packaging process, such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product and a vacuum skin package is thereby produced;

wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web of the vacuum skin package to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product;

wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package comprises a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha olefin copolymer; and

wherein the bottom web of the vacuum skin package comprises a sealant layer comprising a blend of

- i) between 60% and ~~90%~~ 80%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
- ii) between ~~40%~~ 20% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene.

7. (currently amended) The microwaveable vacuum skin package of claim 6 wherein the support member comprises a material selected from the group consisting of

polypropylene, polystyrene, polyamide, 1,4- polymethylpentene, and crystallized polyethylene terephthalate.

8. (currently amended) The microwaveable vacuum skin package of claim 6 wherein the bottom web comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising a blend of:
 - i) between 60% and ~~90%~~ 80%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
 - ii) between ~~40%~~ 20% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene; and
- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, polyacrylonitrile, and polyester.

9. (currently amended) The microwaveable package of claim 6 wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer; and
- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, and polyester.

10. (original) The microwaveable package of claim 9 wherein the ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer comprises ethylene/ 1-octene copolymer.

11. to 15. (canceled)

16. (currently amended) A method of preparing a microwaveable vacuum skin package comprising:

- a) providing a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
- b) providing a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface;
- c) adhering the lower surface of the bottom web to the upper surface of the support member;
- d) placing a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and

- e) draping a top web over the food product, in a vacuum skin packaging process, such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product and a vacuum skin package is thereby produced; and such that the top web of the vacuum skin package is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web of the vacuum skin package to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product;

wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package comprises a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha olefin copolymer; and

wherein the bottom web of the vacuum skin package comprises a sealant layer comprising a blend of

- i) between 60% and ~~90%~~ 80%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
- ii) between ~~40%~~ 20% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene.

17. (original) The method of claim 16 wherein the support member comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polystyrene, polyamide, 1,4- polymethylpentene, and crystallized polyethylene terephthalate.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein the bottom web of the vacuum skin package comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising a blend of:
 - i) between 60% and ~~90%~~ 80%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
 - ii) between ~~40%~~ 20% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene; and
- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, and polyester.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer; and

- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, polyacrylonitrile, and polyester.

20. (original) The method of claim 19 wherein the ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer comprises ethylene/ 1-octene copolymer.

21. (previously presented) The package of claim 6 wherein the food product is a cooked food product.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the food product is a cooked food product.

23. (new) A microwaveable vacuum skin package comprising:
- a) a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
 - b) a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface, the lower surface of the bottom web being adhered to the upper surface of the support member;
 - c) a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and
 - d) a top web disposed on the food product;

wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package is draped over the food product, by a vacuum skin packaging process, such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product and a vacuum skin package is thereby produced;

wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product;

wherein the top web of the vacuum skin package comprises a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha olefin copolymer; and

wherein the bottom web of the vacuum skin package comprises a sealant layer consisting essentially of a blend of

- i) between 60% and 90%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
- ii) between 10% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene.

24. (new) The microwaveable vacuum skin package of claim 6 wherein the seal between the top and bottom webs has a peel strength, before microwaving, of at least 4 pounds per inch, and a peel strength, after microwaving, of less than 2.5 pounds per inch.